
HOUSE BILL No. 1637

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 20-12-22.2.

Synopsis: Funding for teacher recruitment and retention. Establishes a teacher recruitment and retention grant program, administered by the state student assistance commission, to: (1) attract qualified teachers to those geographical areas of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists; and (2) retain qualified teachers in teacher shortage areas; by providing scholarships to persons working toward a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree. Provides that as a condition of participating in the program and receiving a scholarship, a teacher must agree to employment as a licensed teacher in a school district located in a teacher shortage area for at least three years.

Effective: July 1, 2003.

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January 16, 2003, read first time and referred to Committee on Ways and Means.

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First Regular Session 113th General Assembly (2003)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2002 Regular or Special Session of the General Assembly.

HOUSE BILL No. 1637

A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 20-12-22.2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
2 AS A **NEW** CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2003]:

4 **Chapter 22.2. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant**
5 **Program**

6 **Sec. 1.** As used in this chapter, "approved institution of higher
7 learning" has the meaning set forth in IC 20-12-21-3.

8 **Sec. 2.** As used in this chapter, "commission" refers to the state
9 student assistance commission established by IC 20-12-21-4.

10 **Sec. 3.** As used in this chapter, "fund" refers to the teacher
11 recruitment and retention grant fund established by section 5 of
12 this chapter.

13 **Sec. 4. (a)** The teacher recruitment and retention grant program
14 is established. The commission shall administer the program.

15 **(b)** The purpose of the program is to attract additional qualified
16 teachers to those geographical areas of the state where a critical
17 shortage of teachers exists and to retain the qualified teachers



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1 already serving as licensed teachers in teacher shortage areas by
 2 making available scholarships to persons working toward a
 3 master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree at
 4 an approved institution of higher learning.

5 **Sec. 5. (a)** The teacher recruitment and retention grant fund is
 6 established to make awards authorized under this chapter to
 7 eligible applicants.

8 **(b)** The fund consists of the following:

9 **(1)** Appropriations made by the general assembly.

10 **(2)** Gifts, grants, devises, or bequests made to the state in
 11 order to achieve the purposes of the fund.

12 **(c)** The fund shall be administered by the commission. The
 13 expenses of administering the fund shall be paid from money in the
 14 fund.

15 **(d)** The fund shall be separate and distinct from other funds
 16 administered by the commission. Money in the fund may not be
 17 exchanged with or transferred to other funds.

18 **(e)** The treasurer of state shall invest the money in the fund not
 19 currently needed to meet the obligations of the fund in the same
 20 manner as other public funds are invested. Interest that accrues
 21 from those investments shall be deposited in the fund.

22 **(f)** Money in the fund at the end of a state fiscal year does not
 23 revert to the state general fund.

24 **(g)** Money in the fund is appropriated continuously for the
 25 purpose stated in subsection (a).

26 **Sec. 6. (a)** An approved institution of higher learning located in
 27 Indiana that offers a master's degree in education or an
 28 educational specialist degree may apply to the commission for
 29 participation in the program.

30 **(b)** As part of the program, participating institutions shall
 31 collaborate with the commission to identify, recruit, and place
 32 teacher education graduates, from both within and outside
 33 Indiana, in school districts located in areas of Indiana where a
 34 critical shortage of teachers exists, as determined by the
 35 commission.

36 **Sec. 7. (a)** The commission shall provide grants from the fund to
 37 participating institutions of higher learning for the purpose of
 38 awarding scholarships to qualified persons pursuing a master's
 39 degree in education or an educational specialist degree at the
 40 institutions while rendering service as a licensed teacher in a school
 41 district in a geographical area of the state where a critical shortage
 42 of teachers exists.

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(b) A scholarship awarded under this chapter shall be applied to the total cost for tuition, books, materials, and fees at the institution in which the student is enrolled, not to exceed an amount equal to the highest total cost of tuition, books, materials, and fees assessed by a state institution of higher learning during that school year. A teacher who relocates to Indiana from another state in order to participate in the program shall be classified as a resident of Indiana for tuition purposes.

(c) To qualify for a scholarship under this chapter, a person must:

- (1) be admitted to an approved institution of higher learning as a full-time or part-time student pursuing a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree;
- (2) agree, in writing, to the employment requirements under section 12 of this chapter; and
- (3) meet any criteria established by the commission.

Sec. 8. (a) Persons awarded scholarships under the grant program established by this chapter may receive the scholarships for not more than four (4) school years. However, the maximum number of scholarships that may be made to a student may not exceed the length of time required to complete the number of academic hours necessary to obtain a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree.

(b) Scholarships under the grant program may not be based upon an applicant's eligibility for financial aid.

Sec. 9. In addition to a scholarship awarded under this chapter, an eligible person relocating to a geographical area of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists, as determined by the commission, to participate in the grant program under this chapter is eligible for reimbursement from the fund for the person's moving expenses to the critical teacher shortage area. The commission shall adopt rules necessary for the administration of the relocation expense reimbursement component of the grant program under this chapter.

Sec. 10. The commission may use money in the fund for professional development and support services as may be necessary for the retention of teachers participating in the program in those geographical areas of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists.

Sec. 11. A person participating in the program who fails to complete a program of study that will enable that person to obtain a master's degree in education or educational specialist degree is



liable to the commission for the sum of all awards made to that person under the program, plus interest accruing at the current federal Stafford Loan rate at the time the person abrogates the person's participation in the program.

Sec. 12. (a) As a condition for participation in the program, a teacher shall agree to employment as a licensed teacher in a school district located in a geographical area of the state where a critical shortage of teachers exists, for a period of at least three (3) years, which shall include those years of service rendered while obtaining the master's degree in education or educational specialist degree.

(b) Service rendered by a participant as a licensed teacher in a school district in a geographical critical teacher shortage area before that teacher becomes a participant in the program may not be considered to have fulfilled the employment commitment required under this section.

(c) A person failing to comply with the employment commitment in any required school year is immediately in breach of contract and becomes liable immediately to the commission for the sum of all scholarships awarded and relocation expenses granted to that person, less one-third (1/3) of the amount of that sum for each year that service was rendered, plus interest accruing at the current federal Stafford Loan rate at the time the breach occurs. However, the commission may defer any repayments required by this section for the person's failure to comply with the employment commitment if there is no employment position immediately available upon the teacher's obtaining of the master's degree in education or educational specialist degree. After the period of the deferral, the person shall begin or resume the required teaching duties or shall become liable to the board under this subsection.

Sec. 13. (a) The commission shall maintain complete and accurate records in implementing the grant program, including the following:

- (1) The number and amount of scholarships awarded under this chapter.
- (2) The number of persons completing a master's degree in education or an educational specialist degree under the program.
- (3) The number of individuals who fulfill the employment requirements under this chapter.

(b) Each participating institution shall provide the commission with information concerning the following:

- (1) The awarding of scholarships under this chapter.



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1 (2) The academic progress made by each recipient of a
2 scholarship under this chapter.

3 (3) Other pertinent information requested by the commission.

4 Sec. 14. The commission may allow an approved institution of
5 higher learning to act as its agent in accepting applications from,
6 determining eligibility for, and making awards to eligible
7 applicants of the approved institution of higher learning. The
8 institution of higher learning shall provide to the commission on a
9 timely basis any information, reports, and accounting the
10 commission requires.

11 Sec. 15. The commission may adopt rules under IC 4-22-2
12 necessary to carry out this chapter, including rules governing the
13 enforcement of any employment requirements and repayment
14 requirements.

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